

**Testimony of Congressman Jim Turner Before the National Parks, Recreation, and Public Lands  
Subcommittee of the House Resources Committee**

**March 19, 2002**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I would like to thank you for holding this hearing on HR 2982, legislation sponsored by Chairman Hansen and me along with 124 other cosponsors to create in our nation's capital a national memorial to all victims of terrorism against the United States.

I would also like to thank Lisa Beamer, Liz Howell, Joe Finley, and Lieutenant Colonel Ted Anderson, all of whom suffered great loss on September 11<sup>th</sup>, for being with us today. Each of them will share with you a compelling personal story that highlights the significance of this memorial.

The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> marked the first attack carried out on American soil by a foreign adversary since Pearl Harbor and the first attack on the mainland since the War of 1812. More Americans lost their lives on that day than on any day in American history since The Battle of Antietam in the Civil War.

Almost three thousand died at the World Trade Center, including 343 firefighters and 60 police officers. 189 died in the attack on the Pentagon. 45 died on United Flight 93 that crashed in Pennsylvania.

On that fateful day many more would have lost their lives were it not for the selfless acts of courage carried out by many brave Americans like Todd Beamer, whose widow is with us today, and Lt. Colonel Ted Anderson, who pulled survivors from the burning rubble of the Pentagon.

America must never forget what happened that day, and America must forever remember those who died and those whose lives will never be the same. The loss, the suffering, the pain, the shattered dreams -- all caused by evil terrorists on a clear September morning -- left America a different place and ended an age where peace and personal security at home was taken for granted.

On September 11<sup>th</sup>, our President, the Congress, and the American people responded with one voice to declare war on terrorism. This great tragedy defined a war that did not begin on that day nor can its end be predicted.

The great wars of the past have been fought with massive armies and with conventional weapons. Objectives were defined in terms of defeating armies and taking control of land masses. In the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, we began to be exposed to a new form of warfare fueled by technological progress where developed societies became more vulnerable to attack and weapons accessible to terrorists became more lethal and effective. The rise of extremism rooted in religious fanaticism produced terrorists who willingly give their lives for their cause and take the lives of innocent people without remorse.

The great memorials that dot the landscape of our nation's capital reflect the course of American history and are a constant reminder of our commitment to freedom, justice and democracy. We see these shared values in our monuments to great leaders, and we see them in our memorials to the soldiers who died in great wars fought in Europe, in the Pacific, in Korea, and in Vietnam.

The war on terrorism -- the first war of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century -- will not be marked by one geographic location. It is a global war that has been, is being, and will be fought at home and abroad. Though they have lost their

lives in places far and near over a span of time that includes the past, present and perhaps the future, the victims of terrorism, both civilian and military, deserve solemn tribute, for they died at the hands of the enemies of America because they were Americans.

This memorial will honor those Americans whose lives have been lost to terrorism and will symbolize the great struggle in which we are now engaged. And some day this memorial will mark the time in the course of history when freedom and respect for the dignity of man overcame tyranny and hate and evil. Indeed, it will stand for the age when America faced its greatest challenge, stood tall, persevered and protected peace, progress and civility for all mankind.

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